



July 22, 2021

Mr. Ryan Safty
Community Development Department
Town of Los Gatos
110 E. Main Street
Los Gatos, CA 95031

RE: 15605 El Gato Lane

Dear Ryan:

I reviewed the drawings, and evaluated the site context. My comments and recommendations are as follows:

NEIGHBORHOOD CONTEXT

The site is located in an established neighborhood of older mostly small one-story homes and a few larger houses. The site is shown on the photos of the site and its surroundings on the following page.



Attached is our justification letter which shows that this neighborhood is old and none of the homes have any character or style that makes sense to follow. As most homes in this area are old at some given point these will be demolished and new homes which will be built. The newer homes being built in no way match any style of architecture, form or character of the existing homes. Some of the homes are so out of place. Some of the existing homes also do not have any character or form which are literally the neighbors that lets us follow them.

Some suggestions of breaking the long lines have been followed to the extent



THE SITE



Home to the immediate left



Home to the immediate right



Nearby house across El Gato Lane



Nearby house across El Gato Lane



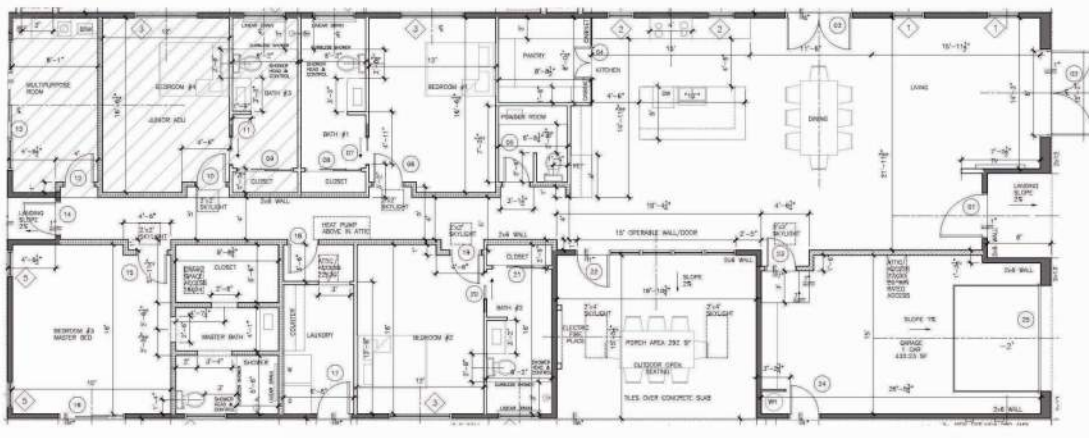
Nearby house across El Gato Lane



Nearby house across El Gato Lane

ISSUES AND CONCERNS

The proposed project would remove the existing one-story home on the site, and replace it with a larger one-story house - see proposed floor plan and elevation drawings below.



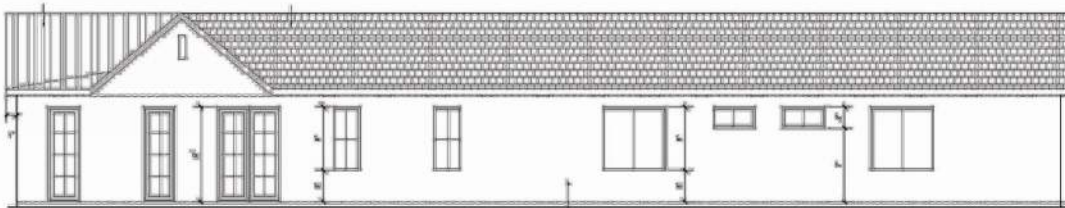
Proposed Floor Plan



Proposed Front Elevation



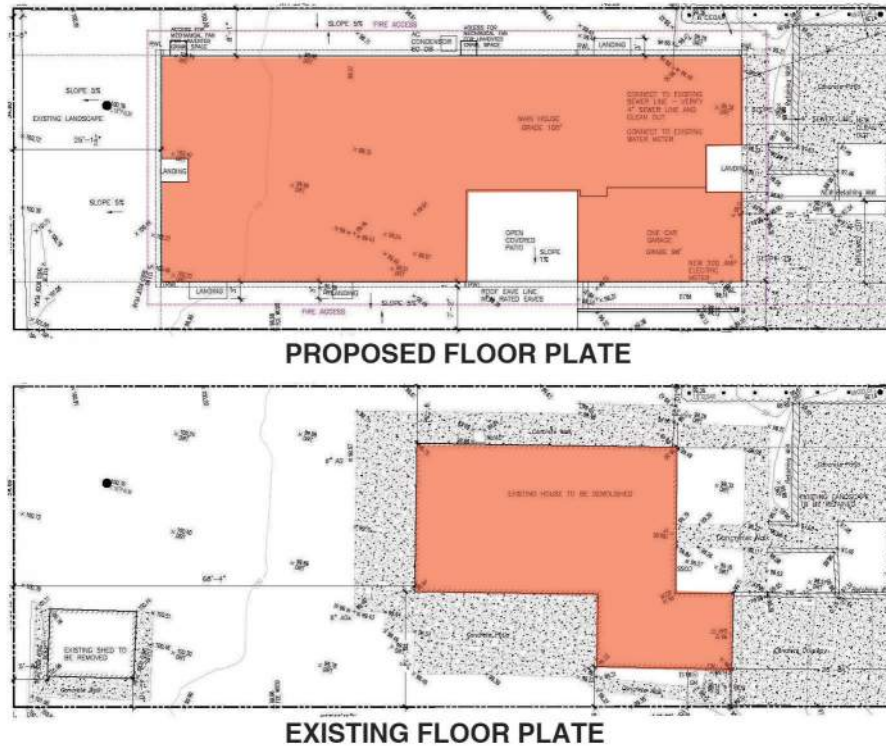
Proposed Rear Elevation



Proposed Right Side Elevation



Proposed Left Side Elevation



Existing and Proposed Site Plan Comparison

The immediate neighborhood is comprised of predominantly one-story homes designed with shed and low-slope gable roofs similar to traditional Eichler Style homes. The height and bulk of the proposed replacement house would not be out of scale, but there are several design issues and conflicts with the Town's Residential Design Guidelines including the following:

2.2.2 Provide front facade articulation similar to those predominant in the neighborhood

- *If facades along a street front are generally simple, avoid large changes in front wall planes.*

While there is some variation in the front facades of nearby homes, most follow the simplicity of the Eichler design style. As most of the homes in this neighborhood have no character, we have followed the suggestion of providing the awning over the garage door to get some interest

3.2.2 Design for architectural integrity

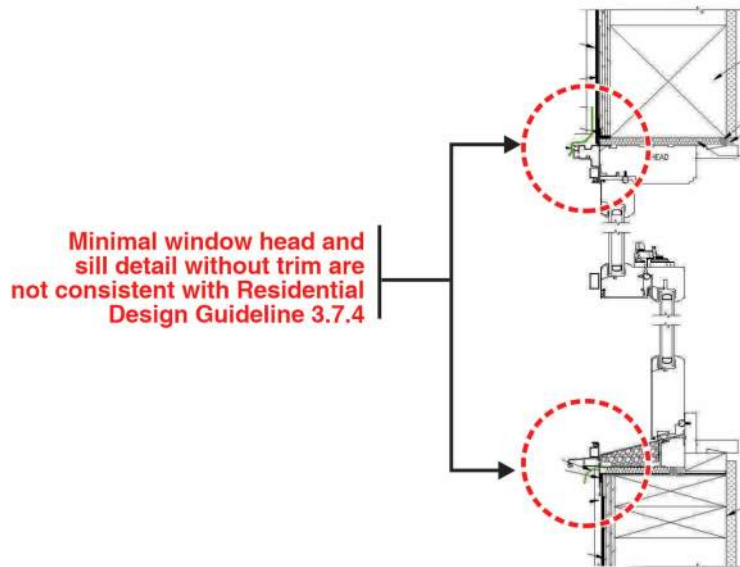
- Carry wall materials, window types and architectural details around all sides of the house. Avoid side and rear elevations that are markedly different from the front elevation.

This is perhaps the primary issue or set of issues regarding this proposed design. As currently designed, the structure is a uniform rectangular box married to a front portion that is totally different in form and detail.

We have changed the roof material to composition shingle roof to match the rear roof. The accent entry roof and the metal awnings are standing seam metal roof. All windows are similar all throughout the house on all sides with similar windows / doors with true divided lights. The simplicity of the structure is to keep the house within budget for ease of construction.

3.7.4 Design the windows with attention to matching the traditional details of the architectural style

- *Most architectural styles - except Mission, Spanish Eclectic or Modern - should have wood trim around the windows. The trim width should be matched to the style, but in general, should not be less than 3 1/2 inches wide. Head trim depth should be equal to or wider than the jamb casing, but not less than one-sixth of the opening width.*
- *Projecting window sills and heads are strongly encouraged unless the architectural style would not normally have those features.*
- *Wood trim is also encouraged on stucco houses unless the window frames are recessed at least 6 inches from the outside face of the wall. The use of stucco covered foam trim is strongly discouraged.*
- *Divided lights (i.e., larger window panes broken up into smaller pieces) are common in many home styles found in Los Gatos. Use either vertical or square proportions for the smaller window elements. Be consistent in the proportions (i.e., the ratio of the horizontal to the vertical dimension) of the smaller panes. Do not use snap in flat grids to simulate divided lights. Use either true divided lights or one of the newer window systems that have dimensional muntins on both the exterior and interior of the glass along with a spacer muntin between the panes of glass. Use consistently for windows on all sides of the house.*



This window are set close to the exterior face of the wall, have minimal and non-traditional head and sill details, and lack window trim all of which are not consistent with Residential Design Guideline 3.7.4.

We do have recessed windows on the front as the walls are 2x12, so the windows and doors will be recessed which gives the depth. The same detail is continued for all sides to give the recess for windows on side with 2x6 walls and at the doors and windows it will be 2x4.

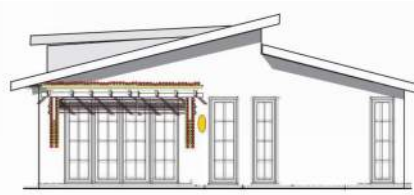
RECOMMENDATIONS

Use shed and flat roofs similar to other homes in the immediate neighborhood

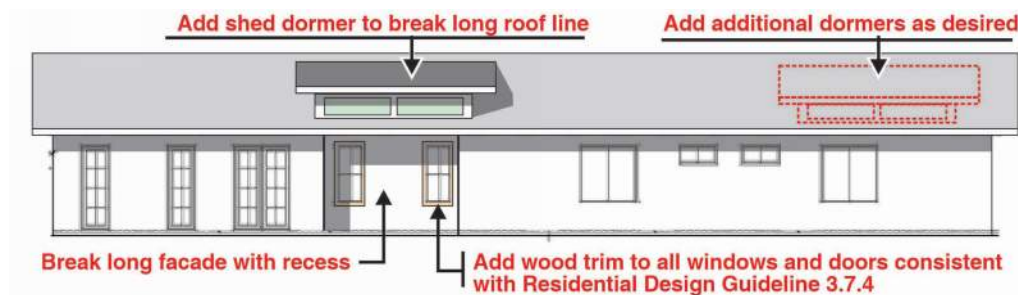


Add landscaped trellis over garage

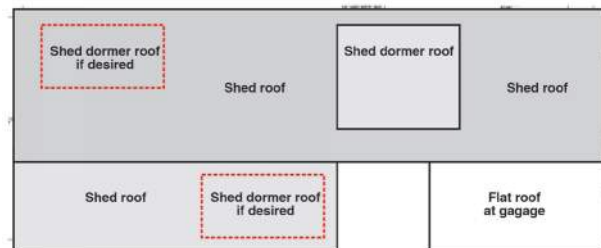
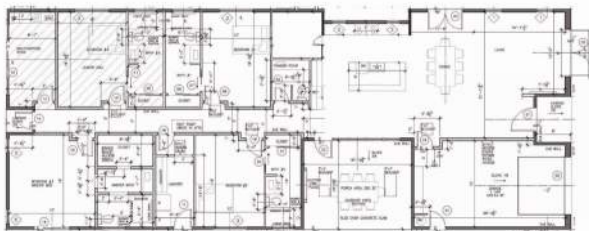
Recommended Front Elevation



Recommended Rear Elevation

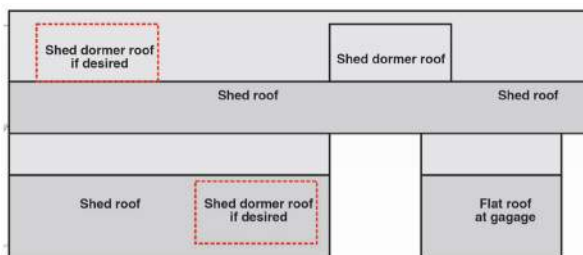


*Recommended Right Side Elevation
Left Side Elevation similar*



I feel that I could also recommend one other approach that I studied. It is more similar to the applicant's proposed design, but simplified in a traditional style found throughout Los Gatos. The alternate front elevation and roof plan are shown below. This alternative approach would require some minor floor plan changes.

- Moving the face of the garage back from the front facade by a minimum distance of 3 feet.
- Adjust garage recess by either reducing the depth of the garage, reducing the size of the exterior patio, reducing the dimensions of the bedrooms on this side of the house, or a combination of these adjustments to achieve the garage setback.



No matter which of these two approaches is selected, they should follow the recommendations below.

We would like to keep the design as shown, but accepting some suggestions by adding awnings on the sides to break the long elevation as well as added skylights also to break the roof line.

1. Change the roof forms to shed and flat or gable roofs, and eliminate metal roofing - see nearby neighborhood examples below.

These are old homes from the 50's which do not have any character and eventually all these homes will be rebuilt and not follow this style. With the current Title 24 requirements we want an energy efficient home where we can get more insulation in the attic rather than this form of architecture



2. Add trellis over garage - see photo example below.



A metal awning similar to the door in the front has been added to the garage door.

3. Articulate the long right side facade by recessing a portion of the facade at the kitchen - see diagram on page 6.

Note: All rooms are substantially deeper than is common for most new homes in Los Gatos, and additional side wall articulations should not impact the liveability of the house.

We have added some awnings on the sides to break the long wall. We would like to maximize our area and not reduce the area with the recess

4. Add one or more roof dormers to break up long roof form

As we want to keep the construction easy and at a reasonable cost we want the simplicity and have added skylights to break the roof line

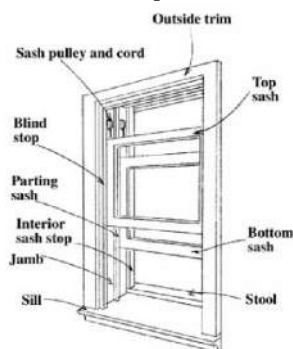
5. Utilize more traditional window details, and add wood trim at all windows and doors consistent with Residential

Design Guideline 3.7.4 -see photo example below.

As the architectural style that we are following is simple and clean and does not need wood trims as the windows are recessed

6. If divided lite windows are desired, use true or simulated divided lites consistent with Residential Design Guideline 3.7.4 - see example below.

all windows and doors are with true divided lites



Ryan, I have no other recommendations for change.

Sincerely,

CANNON DESIGN GROUP

Larry L. Cannon







some neighboring homes which have no architecture, character that we feel that we need to follow.